

AO 91 (Rev. 11/11) Criminal Complaint

**FILED**

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT**

for the

Eastern District of Missouri

OCT 15 2021

U. S. DISTRICT COURT  
EASTERN DISTRICT OF MO  
CAPE GIRARDEAU

United States of America  
v.

Nicholas A. Barton  
Nathan Murray-Groves

Case No.

1:21MJ4219 ACL

*Defendant(s)*

**CRIMINAL COMPLAINT**

I, the complainant in this case, state that the following is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

On or about the date(s) of January 9, 2021 in the county of Butler in the  
Eastern District of Missouri, the defendant(s) violated:

*Code Section*

Title 18, United States Code,  
Sections 1951, 2, and 924(c)(1)

*Offense Description*

Aiding & Abetting the Interference w/Commerce by Threat or Violence;  
Aiding & Abetting the Possession of Firearm in Furtherance of a Crime of  
Violence

This criminal complaint is based on these facts:

See attached Affidavit

☒ Continued on the attached sheet.

  
Complainant's signature

Corey Mitchell, TFO, DEA

Printed name and title

Sworn to before me and signed in my presence.

Date: 10/15/2021



Judge's signature

City and state: Cape Girardeau, MO

Abbie Crites-Leoni, U.S. Magistrate Judge

Printed name and title

[illegible]

**AFFIDAVIT**

I, Corey Mitchell, being first duly sworn, depose and say that:

1. I am a duly commissioned Task Force Officer for the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) and a Narcotics Investigator with the Poplar Bluff Police Department. I have served as a law enforcement officer in the State of Missouri for over 26 years, investigating hundreds of violent offenses to include: murders; assaults, robberies; rapes; burglaries; narcotics offenses; and countless other crimes, involving violations of state and federal statutes.
2. I am currently assisting in the investigation of Nicholas Alan BARTON and Nathan MURRAY-GROVES regarding a robbery that occurred at The Bottle Shop, located at 1006 South Westwood Blvd., Poplar Bluff, Missouri, in Butler County, on January 9, 2021, which is located in the Eastern District of Missouri, Southeastern Division. I am familiar with the facts and circumstances surrounding this event, including the present status of the pending state charges against BARTON and MURRAY-GROVES. BARTON appeared in Butler County Circuit Court for a Motion to Suppress on October 4, 2021. According to Butler County Prosecuting Attorney, Kacey Proctor, the Circuit Court Judge granted the Motion to Suppress as to all evidence and statements obtained during the course of the investigation for this offense for lack of jurisdiction. PA Proctor is appealing the court's decision; however, BARTON and MURRAY-GROVES have a court appearance on Monday, October 18, 2021, for consideration for bond reductions. The Butler County PA is concerned that BARTON and MURRAY-GROVES will be released on bond.
3. Present Offense Conduct:

On January 9, 2021, at approximately 6:35 P.M., officers with the Poplar Bluff Police Department were dispatched to The Bottle Shop located at 1006 South Westwood Boulevard in Poplar Bluff, Missouri, for a reported armed robbery. The Bottle Shop is a liquor store in Poplar Bluff, Missouri that sells beer, wine, and liquor of all types and brands manufactured in states other than Missouri and is supplied by wholesalers located in states other than Missouri.

Upon arrival, officers made contact with the store owner, Quan Nguyen who reported that two white males had entered the store, brandished a firearm, and stole over \$3,000.00 in cash from the business.

Nguyen further reported that the two white males entered the business together on the evening of January 9, 2021, and they were both wearing hooded sweatshirts. Nguyen stated that one of the subjects was wearing a blue hooded sweatshirt and the other subject

was wearing a black hooded sweatshirt. Both male subjects were wearing face masks, jeans, gloves, and black tennis shoes. One of the male subjects pulled a handgun on Nguyen and demanded money.

Nguyen reported that in the past, he has fought with subjects trying to rob his business. However, he did not fight this time because he stated he could see that the firearm was loaded. Nguyen provided a copy of the video surveillance from the store which captured footage from both outside and inside the business.

The video surveillance depicts the following events:

- 18:20 hours – Camera 16 – A black Dodge Caliber with a blue front fender travels towards The Bottle Shop. The vehicle approaches the business traveling west on Velma Street and parks facing south on the lot of Maya's Mexican Restaurant (located at 940 South Westwood Blvd.).
- 18:30 hours – Cameras 16 and 14 – The vehicle remains parked for 10 minutes. The Dodge Caliber then exits the parking lot of Maya's Mexican Restaurant and turns westbound onto Velma Street and then turns southbound onto Westwood Blvd.
- 18:31 hours – Camera 13 – The vehicle turns into a parking lot located at 1018 South Westwood Blvd. and parks.
- 18:33 hours – Camera 13 – Two subjects are observed walking in the parking lot of The Deep Freeze, Inc. Meat Shop, located at 1010 South Westwood Blvd.
- 18:34 hours – Camera 13 – The subjects approach The Bottle Shop and the male subject in the black hooded sweatshirt pauses to let the male subject in the blue hooded sweatshirt enter the store first.
- 18:34 hours – Cameras 1, 2, 3, and 4 – Both subjects enter the store. The subject in the black hooded sweatshirt walks along the north wall of the store near the coolers while the subject in the blue hooded sweatshirt walks along the south side of the business near the counter where the cash register is located.
- 18:35 hours – Cameras 1-4 – The subject in the black sweatshirt walks back along the coolers towards the front door and exits the business. The subject in the blue sweatshirt approaches the register and pulls out a small revolver from the front pocket of his sweatshirt and points it at Nguyen's face.
- 18:35 hours – Cameras 1-4 – Nguyen hands the subject in the blue sweatshirt the money from the cash register and the subject exits the store with the money.
- 18:35 hours – Camera 13 – The subject in the black sweatshirt walks south along the lot of The Bottle Shop, followed by the subject in the blue sweatshirt.

Officers canvassed the area and conducted a further search for the subjects but were unsuccessful in finding them that night.

On January 11, 2021, the Poplar Bluff Police Department (PBPD) lifted still images from the video surveillance of the robbery depicting the subjects and the suspect vehicle and disseminated the images to local media outlets and posted the images on the Poplar Bluff Police Department's Facebook Page for help in identifying the two subjects. An

anonymous caller contacted the PBPB and reported that the suspect vehicle was presently located at 1212 West Monroe Street in Campbell, Missouri.

Officers with PBPB contacted the Campbell Police Department for assistance in verifying the location of the suspect vehicle and requested continued surveillance on the vehicle until PBPB officers could respond. I, Corey Mitchell, along with four other officers responded to the residence in Campbell, Missouri, where the black Dodge Caliber with the blue front fender was located.

We knocked on the front door and announced our presence and the door was opened by a white female identified as Stephanie Passley. We advised Ms. Passley of our purpose in being at her residence and asked if we could enter. Ms. Passley allowed us to come inside. Ms. Passley was asked about the Dodge Caliber parked in front of her residence and she said it belonged to her boyfriend Nicholas BARTON. Ms. Passley further stated that BARTON was not presently at the residence and that BARTON had gone to a store in Malden, Missouri in her blue van.

A short time later, a blue Ford Windstar van arrived at the residence and two white males exited the van. The two subjects were identified as Nicholas BARTON and Nathan MURRAY-GROVES. The subjects were detained and read their Miranda Rights. Both subjects waived their rights and agreed to be interviewed. Both BARTON and MURRAY-GROVES initially denied involvement in the robbery of The Bottle Shop. However, after a short period of time both BARTON and MURRAY-GROVES admitted to participating in the robbery. MURRAY-GROVES confessed that he was the subject wearing the blue hooded sweatshirt that had brandished the firearm and obtained the money from the store owner. BARTON informed police that he had participated in the robbery but had left the store right before it began to take place. BARTON admitted that he was the subject wearing the black hooded sweatshirt.

BARTON and MURRAY-GROVES were transported to the Poplar Bluff Police Department. MURRAY-GROVES was further interviewed at the police station. He was again read his Miranda rights and formally waived his rights in writing. MURRAY-GROVES told police that the day prior to the robbery he was leaving a drug dealers house in Poplar Bluff and he was approached by several individuals who were associates of MURRAY-GROVES' previous drug connection in St. Louis, Missouri. MURRAY-GROVES further told police that the associates told him that he still owed money to the St. Louis dealer and he needed to commit a robbery that would be aired on the news or they would harm or kill him. MURRAY-GROVES further stated that the associates provided him with a blue hooded sweatshirt and a .22 caliber revolver that was used in the robbery. MURRAY-GROVES stated that he decided to rob The Bottle Shop and he and Nicholas BARTON drove to the area and scouted the business. BARTON was driving and he parked at a business to the south of The Bottle Shop and they both exited the vehicle and walked to the store. MURRAY-GROVES stated that he pointed the revolver at the cashier and demanded money. The cashier handed him the money from the register and he and BARTON then ran towards BARTON'S vehicle. They drove to a

location on a county road to meet with the associates where they turned over the money, the hooded sweatshirts, and the firearm.


Later on that day, January 11, 2021, MURRAY-GROVES asked to speak with law enforcement officers again. MURRAY-GROVES indicated he wished to tell the truth about the robbery. MURRAY-GROVES stated the robbery was the result of instructions given to him by his gang leader. MURRAY-GROVES identified his gang as the "10-7 Crips" and stated that he and BARTON were members of the gang and were ordered to commit the robbery. MURRAY-GROVES further stated that the money taken from the robbery was given to the leader of the gang immediately following the robbery. MURRAY-GROVES had \$200 in \$10 dollar bills on his person when he was arrested. He was asked whether that money came from the robbery. MURRAY-GROVES initially denied that the money came from the robbery; however, he later admitted that the \$200 in \$10 dollar bills was his "cut" of the proceeds from the robbery. MURRAY-GROVES also stated that on the morning of his arrest, he and BARTON had taken the revolver back to the gang and returned it to the gang leader. MURRAY-GROVES said that he and BARTON then stopped at an auto parts store in Qulin to buy paint to repaint BARTON'S vehicle.

BARTON was further interviewed at the Poplar Bluff Police Department on January 11, 2021. BARTON was again read his Miranda rights and formally waived his rights in writing. BARTON had been developed as a suspect in another robbery with a firearm that had occurred at 53 Package Convenience Store in Poplar Bluff on June 10, 2020. BARTON initially denied committing the robbery of 53 Package and stated he was only good for The Bottle Shop robbery. The following day, January 12, 2021, while in custody at the Butler County jail, BARTON confessed to a Butler County sheriff's deputy that he had committed the robbery at 53 Package as well.

Additional surveillance footage showing the suspect vehicle and the two subjects on the night of the robbery, January 9, 2021, was retrieved from The Deep Freeze Meat Shop. The time stamps on the surveillance footage were slightly different then the time stamps on the surveillance footage from The Bottle Shop; however, based on my training and experience and the numerous cases I have worked where video surveillance was available, it is completely normal for different camera systems to have different time stamps. That footage was reviewed and depicts the following events:

- 18:28:42 – A black Dodge Caliber with a blue front end stops at a stop sign on Velma Street at South Westwood Blvd. The Dodge Caliber turns left and travels south on South Westwood Blvd.
- 18:29:09 – The Dodge Caliber turns into the parking lot of 1018 South Westwood Blvd. The vehicle drives out of camera view.
- 18:30:23 – Two subjects emerge from the parking lot of 1018 S. Westwood Blvd. One of the subjects is wearing a blue Twin Rivers Royals hooded sweatshirt and the second subject is wearing a black zip up hooded sweatshirt. Both subjects are wearing face masks. The subjects walk towards the bottle shop.


- 18:31:40 – The two subjects wearing the blue and black hooded sweatshirts enter The Bottle Shop.
- 18:32:33 – The subject wearing the black hooded sweatshirt exits The Bottle Shop and walks south toward The Deep Freeze.
- 18:33:04 – The subject in the blue hooded sweatshirt exits The Bottle Shop and runs toward the subject in the black hooded sweatshirt. Both subjects run together toward the parking lot of 1018 S. Westwood Blvd.
- 18:33:51 – The black Dodge Caliber leaves the parking lot of 1018 South Westwood Blvd. and turns left onto State Highway 53.



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Task Force Officer Corey Mitchell  
Drug Enforcement Administration

Subscribed and sworn before me this 15<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2021.



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Honorable Abbie Crites-Leoni  
United States Magistrate Judge